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A *Theology* vol 67,
CONFESSIO

OF

FAITH,

DELIVERED AT

ROCHFORD, in ESSEX,

THE

Twenty-seventh of *June*, 1734.

By JAMES SMITH, at his
ORDINATION. *h*



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[Price Six-Pence.]

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1851



A

Confession of FAITH.



BELIEVE that the Sacred Writings of the old and new Testaments, are the very Word of God, given by the Inspiration of God the Spirit, infallibly conducting the Penmen thereof; and that they are the only Rule of Faith and Practice; containing all things necessary to be believed for Salvation, and all things needful to be done in the Way of Salvation. From thence must all our Doctrines flow, thereon they must be built, thereby they must be proved; if not, they ought to be rejected: For from thence the Man of God, may be thoroughly furnished with the Knowledge of every good Work, and be made sufficiently Wise unto Salvation, thro' Faith in Christ.

I believe, that nothing ought to be added to, nor taken from those Sacred Oracles; but in the Interpretation thereof, I believe it to be our indispensible Duty, to give the Holy Spirit the Honour of his own Prerogative, to wit,

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in Explaining of his own Word, which is to explain Scripture by Scripture; for the Holy Ghost is certainly the best Interpreter of his own Meaning; and no Scripture is of private Interpretation.

I also believe, according to these Divine Oracles, that a right and saving Understanding of them, is only by the Illumination of the Spirit of God, that gave them, on whom we ought always to depend for the same.

I believe, according to the Holy Scriptures, that there is One, and but One only living and true God, whom I believe to be an infinite, eternal, and incomprehensible Spirit, a necessary independent Being; receiving his Being and Existence of none, but hath it eternally in and of himself; on whom alone all other Beings do depend, from whom they all receive their different and distinct Existence; and on whom they all have their Dependance for their daily Subsistence, who is eternally and essentially possessed of all possible Perfections; essentially good, gracious, and merciful, as also holy, just and true; immutable, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, a most wise and absolute Sovereign, always doing according to his Will, both in the superior and inferior Worlds, being accountable to none for his Sovereign Proceedings.

I farther believe, according to the written Word of God, that in this Godhead there is a Trinity of Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;

Ghost; distinct as touching their Personal Characters and Properties, in the Divine Oeconomy, but not divided as touching their Godhead, but are one and the same God; three as touching their Personal Characters, therefore a Trinity; yet not three Gods but One, therefore a Unity: One God, therefore a Unity; yet not one Person but Three, therefore a Trinity; distinct as to personal Subsistence, therefore Three, yet not divided as to Substance, therefore but One; one is not the Person of the other, therefore distinct; yet the Deity of the one, is the Deity of them all, therefore not divided: One necessary Self-existence, therefore but one God; Three necessary Self-subsistences, therefore three Persons. In this divine, incomprehensible, and adorable Mystery, I believe there is neither prior nor posterior, supreme nor subordinate, but that they are in essence one and Co-eternal, and Equal in Will, Power and Glory, and all other Divine perfections whatever.

Thus also I believe, according to the Scriptures, that God, for the Eternal Glory of his own Name, hath by the Eternal immanent Acts of his own Will, unchangeably pre-ordained whatever comes to pass in Time, or shall come to pass eternally, when Time shall be no more: I likewise believe, that there is not the least Thing comes to pass, against, or contrary to, but with the Will and Decree of God; a Sparrow falls not to the Ground without his Will

and Decree, and the very Hairs of our Heads are all numbered, and all Contingences, whatever, were unalterably fixed on, in the eternal, inabortive Womb of the Divine Will and Decree.

In like manner I believe, that there is a Divine, and over-ruling Providence, that guides, over-rules, and directs all Things to their proper predeterminate Ends, the highest of which, is the Glory of God, to which End all Things are directed by an invisible and secret Hand, that never fails to subject all things thereunto; so daily fulfils the most Holy Decrees of the Divine Being, either by an effective, or permissive Providence, either effecting of all Good himself, (that is really so both in Grace and Nature,) or permitting of all Evil as such, to be brought to pass by others, but ever over-rules it to his own Glory and Praise.

Moreover I believe, that the right Use to be made of divine Decrees, and the over-ruling Providence of God, seeing that they are Secrets to us, is, in all respects to be found, in the Way of our Duty as rational Creatures, in conforming to the revealed Will of God, in order to preserve the Life, Health, Strength and Estates, both of ourselves and others; and also to endeavour the spiritual Life and Salvation, both of our own Souls, and the Souls of others; and thus in the way of Duty, to leave the Issue to the Lord, and to his Sovereign Will and Pleasure, in the Course of his all-wise Providence;

dence: For although God has fore-ordained whatever comes to pass, and in his Providence brings all things to pass, exactly according to that Pre-ordination; yet it is not our Province, to sit idle, or be careless, but to use the appointed Means, believing that the Means is preordained, as well as the End, and the Means appointed to bring the End to pass.

I likewise believe, that God executes his Decrees in and by the Works of Creation, in the Course of his Providence; therefore Creation, that admirable Product of Divine Power, must come on; to the end that Divine Decrees might not be frustrated, nor God disappointed of his designed Glory therein, which made Creation necessary.

I therefore believe, that God, Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, did in the Beginning, bring all Things into being, out of nothing, and that by the Word of his Almighty and irresistible Power; and then in the Space of six Days, did bring the whole Creation into its beautiful Form and Order, in all the Creatures, by the same Word of his Power; for he said and it was done, he commanded and they obey'd, and stood forth in their proper determinate Being, Form, and Order; and then took a Glorious condescending Survey of the Works of his Hands, and behold all was very good, nothing imperfect, or of imperfection came out of his pure Hands, and so always continues to uphold all Things, and preserve them in
their

their proper appointed Being, Form, Order, Place and Station, by that very Word of his Power.

I also believe, that whatever was created was mutable, subject and liable to many Vicissitudes and Changes; that neither Angels nor Men, were, or could be created immutable, Immutability being not the Property of a created, but of an uncreated Being alone, namely, God himself, who never changes in his Being, nor varies in his Will, tho' he alters in the Dispensations of his Providence, according to his Will.

I therefore believe, that the Angels, tho' they were created in perfect Purity, yet were mutable, and chargeable with possible Folly; and being mutable, and liable to Change, some of them were in a most sovereign, discriminating Manner, confirmed in their Original, Created, Purity and Perfection by the Lord, who are called Elect Angels; while the Rest being left by a Sovereign Being, (who may do what he will with the Work of his Hand,) upon meer Creation Bottom, and not so confirmed as the other; they wilfully fell from this their first Estate and Habitation, by sinning against God, for which they are reserved in Chains of darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day; from whence they can never be recovered, because a Sovereign Being hath not willed it; they falling, have not the Lord to raise them up again.

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I also believe, that Man was created Male and Female, that the Woman was taken out of Man, both endued with living reasonable Souls, made in the Image of God, in Knowledge, Righteousness, and Holiness, with the Law of God on their Hearts, and Ability to keep the same, having Lordship given them over the Works of God's Hands here below ; but yet mutable Beings, and subject to Change, and liable to fall from their primitive State of created Perfection: Yet, notwithstanding this, Man came pure out of his Maker's Hands, entirely free from any Taint of Sin, free from any Bent, Biass, Propensity, Inclination, or Disposition thereunto ; and had he not come thus out of the Hands of God, a pure and perfect Being, but had been created with these ; then had God been the Author of Man's Sin, as creating of him with a corrupt and sinful Inclination ; but it was not so.

I farther believe, that God entered into a Covenant with Man in this his State of Innocency and Perfection, and not with Adam alone, as a private Person only for himself, but covenanted with him as the public Head and Representative of all Mankind, and so in him, covenanted with them all at once ; the Substance of which Covenant was Life and Death ; Life and Immortality in a State of super-added Felicity, if he had stood in, and held his Integrity ; but Death, if he relinquished and fell from the same.

Of every Tree of the Garden ye may freely eat,
only

only I except (says God) the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil: In the Day thou eatest of it, thou shalt surely die. Adam, no doubt, according to the Law of his Nature, did readily comply herewith; and it would be very irrational to suppose any other; for he who was now in a State of Perfection, with the Law of his God on his Heart, could do no other but readily comply with, and consent to his Maker's Will; the very Law of his Nature bound him to it, and his Perfection and Innocence forbad a Non-compliance thereto: And had he not complied therewith, and consented thereto, it had been his Sin, but that was inconsistent with his now State of Perfection; wherein he continued, until he eat of the prohibited Fruit, and therefore must, till then, continue in Obedience to his Creator's Will, and consequently in a ready Compliance with the Terms and Conditions of this Covenant; so that, hereupon, it became a perfect Covenant, or Compact and Covenant-Agreement between God and Man.

I furthermore believe, according to the Word of God, that Man being left to himself as a mutable Being, only upon meer Creation Bottom, was deceived and prevailed upon by the Woman, to eat of the forbidden Fruit, as she was first deceived and prevailed on by the Serpent to do it; and so falling from God, he threw off his Allegiance, turn'd Rebel against God, took up Arms against his rightful Sovereign,

reign, fell from his primitive Purity and Glory, lost all original Righteousness, and brought himself and all his Posterity into a State of Sin, Death, and Condemnation; and as an inseparable Consequence hereof, all Mankind come into the World, as the Natural Descendants of *Adam*, both guilty of his Sin, as a Covenant-Head, and that by a most just act of Imputation, founded on, arising from, and pronounced by, a most wise, just, holy, tho' now a violated Covenant of Works; the Sentence whereof is forensick, and justly denounces Death and Condemnation on all for the Breach thereof: and also in a vile, unclean, and unholy Condition; as by Generation, Conception, and Birth, they proceed from corrupt and sinful Parents, and so by lineal Descent, they derive the same corrupt Nature from *Adam*, which he had in his fallen and sinful State.

I believe, according to the Word of God, that in this Case, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he alone, is excepted, whose humane Nature, was not produced by common Propagation in Generation, as other Men; but his Conception and Incarnation were miraculous, by the mighty Power of the most High; who, tho' he was made like unto his Brethren, yet without Sin: He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from Sinners; and such an High Priest as this, and only such an one, became us Sinners.

I firmly believe also, according to the Word of God, that God, from all Eternity, of the

meer good Pleasure of his Will, for the Eternal Praise of the Glory of his Grace, has fixed on some of the fallen Race of *Adam*, by an Act of his Grace within himself; and thereby hath chosen them in *Christ*, both unto Grace and Glory; to Grace, Salvation; and Holiness, here, and to eternal Felicity, hereafter; immutably purposing to bring them thereunto by Jesus Christ; but hath passed by the Rest, having in the same sovereign good Pleasure of his Will, denied them an Interest in this his electing Grace and Favour; but for why, is only known to God himself, nor is it our Province to ask the Reason of it: Yet most certain so it is, as is manifest from hence, because the Election of some, implies the Preterition and passing by of the rest; and being thus passed by, and not elected, are left unto themselves, by a Sovereign Being, who may deny this Favour to whom he will, as being not bound to interest any of his rational Creatures therein: And thus being left unto themselves, they, as rational Beings, tho' Vessels of Dishonour, do fit themselves, by their own beloved Sins, for eternal Destruction; tho' they act therein in a very irrational Manner, in Opposition to God and his holy Law; unto which Destruction for Sin they were appointed, and whereunto they come at last; for no other Cause but Sin, and for the Glory of divine Wrath and Justice, in their just Condemnation.

In like manner I believe, that God did from all Eternity, by an Act of Grace within himself,

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self, commonly called, as in the New Testament, Predestination, fix on all the Ways, Means, Methods, and Instruments, whereby, and by whom, he would bring this his eternal Designation in *Christ* to pass, both in Time and to eternity, in the eternal Redemption, Salvation and Glorification of his Chosen; which Act of Predestination, comprehends both the End, and the Means conducing thereunto: It is that Act of the divine Mind, that hath so connected the End with the Means, and the Means with the End, that I believe it as possible for God to cease to be, as for the End and Means to be severed; the End is Salvation, the Means is *Christ*; the End is Fulness of Glory in Perfection, the Means is Holiness in Perfection, in order thereunto; yea, this Act of Predestination, extends itself in Providence unto the Time when, the Place where, the Means by which, the Instruments by whom, the designed Redemption, Regeneration, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, final Perseverance, Salvation and Glory, of God's Chosen, should commence, take Place, and be effectually brought to pass, as is manifest from both Testaments.

I likewise believe, as I find it upon Divine Record, that God did not foresee any thing in his Elect, wherefore he should choose them, more than in those he hath passed by; they were not elected because he foresaw they would believe and repent, and perform new Obedience,

but they were chosen, that they might by his Grace have both Faith and Repentance given them, and that thro' Grace they might be an obedient People. They were not chosen because he foresaw they would be holy, but that thro' Grace he might make them so; for he foresaw no Goodness in any of his Creatures, but what he himself must put into them, as appears from the following Scriptures, *Acts* xiii. 14. *Eph.* i. 4. *2 Thessal.* ii. 13, 14. *1 Peter* i. 2. *Eph.* ii. 8, 10. *Col.* ii. 12. *Acts* v. 31. and xi. 18. and xviii. 27. *Titus* i. 2. *2 Tim.* i. 9. *Deut.* xxx. 6. *Ezech.* xxxvi. 26. *Jer.* xxxii. 39. 40.

I farther believe, that God from everlasting, in his infinite Wisdom, did find out, and fix upon, a most glorious Way for the Redemption and Salvation of his lost People; a Way wherein he hath and will for ever glorify all his divine Perfections in the same; which was by no less than his only, his own, his proper and natural Son; and did enter into a Covenant with him concerning this Thing; between whom and the Father there did a Contract proceed, for the Counsel of Peace was, and is yet between them both; wherein a Platforme was laid, a Method contrived, how God's Chosen should be redeemed and eternally Saved, and all the Divine Perfections receive their due and proper Glory in the same; which was to be accomplished, by the Incarnation, Obedience, Sufferings,

ings, Death, Resurrection, and Intercession of the Son of God in our Nature.

This also I believe, that all the old Testament Promises, Types and Sacrifices, Prophecies and Predictions, which held forth a Messiah to come, were all fulfilled in the Incarnation, Nativity, active and passive Obedience, of Jesus of *Nazareth*, the Son of the Virgin *Mary*; and that the old Testament Saints, had full Pardon of all Sins, Justification before God, Peace with God, and eternal Salvation, only by Faith in this very Person, his Undertakings, Merits, Blood and Righteousness; which was not then exhibited for them, whose Debts he had not then actually paid, whose Sins were not then actually satisfied for, nor was their redemption as yet wrought out; yet they then received all those Benefits, as fully as we do now, upon the Foot of his Covenant undertakings; so that all the old Testament-Saints, were saved in the same Way then, as the new Testament-Saints, are saved in now; and that by Grace, thro' Faith in One and the same *Christ*, with an everlasting Salvation.

I also firmly believe, that God the Word was made, or became Flesh in the *Virgin's* Womb in the Fulness of Time, according to federal Transactions antecedent thereunto: And this his becoming Flesh, I believe, was not by his descending locally from Heaven, to Earth; for that is inconsistent with his Omnipresence as God, filling Heaven and Earth at once; but
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that it was by a Gracious act of Condescension in the Son of God, in assuming of the humane Nature into an hypostatical Union with his divine Person, which humane Nature so assumed, consisteth of a true Body and a reasonable Soul, with all their proper Parts, Powers, and Faculties; nor do I believe, that he had any Part of the humane Nature, either Soul or Body, in Union with his divine Person, before his Incarnation in the Fullness of Time; whatever some fanciful and vapoured Heads may have imagined.

In like manner I believe, concerning this Person, neither a Conversion, Transmutation, nor a Commixtion of Natures in him; *i. e.* the Deity is not converted, changed into, nor mixed with the humane Nature; nor is the humane Nature converted, changed into, or mixed with the divine Nature; but the two Natures in *Christ*, to wit, the Godhead and the Manhood, remain intirely and for ever distinct, though individually united in one Person; so that *Christ* is very and eternal God, and perfect Man in one Person for ever.

I also believe; that God, in the Person of the Son, or Word, did not assume an humane Person, but an humane Nature only; for if he had assumed an humane Person, then there had been two Persons in *Christ*, *to wit*, one humane, and one divine, so consequently two Mediators; but as he assumed only the perfect and entire humane Nature, and not an humane
 Person,

Person, so I believe that the humane Nature never subsisted alone, but always subsisted in Union with the Son of God, both in, and ever from, its first Conception; for if it had ever subsisted alone, without Union to the Son of God, it had been a Person in that its personal Subsistence; but as it hath not, nor ever had any Subsistence personally of its own; only what it hath by virtue of its Union with the Person of the Son of God, in which Nature the Personality consisteth, and properly resides; so consequently, *Christ* is but one Person in two distinct Natures, and the one and only Mediator, in both Natures, between God and Man for ever.

I further believe, concerning this mysterious Person, that in this his incarnate State here below, he lived a poor, humble, self-denying Life; was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief, despised and rejected of Men; who tho' he was eternally and self-essentially rich, the one supreme God over all, blessed for ever, Possessor of Heaven and Earth; yet for our sakes became poor, in the Nature he assumed, that we through his Poverty might be eternally rich; who, as the Second Person in the Godhead, tho' he was God's Equal, and thought it no Robbery to claim a full Equality with God the Father, as to affirm, that He, and the Father are One, and that he was his proper and Natural Son, implying therein his Equality with the Father; yet made himself
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of no Reputation, by taking upon him the essential Form of a Servant, who was in the essential Form of God; and was found in Fashion as a Man, and humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the ignominious and shameful Death of the Cross, whereon he bore the Wrath of God for our Sins, as he before had undertaken to do.

In this his poor and suffering State, I believe he was always doing and suffering his Father's Will and Pleasure, was always upon the Execution of the Counsel of the Divine Will, effecting the great Transactions, that were between the Father and himself, concerning Sinners; fulfilling the Law in all its Requirements, and came under the Curse and Penalty of it in our Stead, had the Guilt of our Sins imputed to him, and so was apprehended by the Justice of God, in a most just and legal Manner for us, as our Surety and Sponfor; who had fore-put himself into, and now really came and stood in our Law-Place, as the guilty Person in our Stead by Imputation; Justice drew forth its Sword of Wrath against him, and sheaths it in his precious God-like Soul, in our Stead, tho' we deserved it, and that for ever: God lays on him the Punishment due to us for Sin, takes Satisfaction at his Hands for us, and on our Behalf; that we might escape the Wrath to come: And all this was the very Birth of an eternal Counsel, the Execution of divine Decrees, the Accomplishment of divine Promises and

and Predictions, and a full and complete answering of all the Types and Sacrifices under the Law; in all Things bringing about, the eternal Settlements of Redemption and Salvation between the Father and Himself, and so finished the Work that was given him to do.

By this his active and passive Obedience, I believe that he wrought out a complete Righteousness for Sinners, which is the sole Matter of their Justification in the Sight of God; and that without an Interest in it, there is no escaping the Wrath to come.

I also believe, that for this Righteousness Sake alone, God is well-pleased; for thereby only the Law is magnified and made honourable, Justice entirely satisfied, God reconciled and made propitious to Sinners, and now the God of Peace: Therefore, by the Death and Undertakings of *Christ*, God is not as some teach, to the Dishonour of *Christ* and his Sacrifice; to wit, a placable and reconcilable God, but entirely pleased with, and reconciled to Sinners, for *Christ's* Sake alone; nor needs there any, nor is there any more Sacrifice for Sin, but that one Sacrifice of himself, once offered up unto God for the same, and that once for all.

Moreover I believe, that the Satisfaction made by *Christ*, was an infinite One; for Sin was objectively infinite, being committed against an infinite God; God in Justice was infinitely offended, and it was impossible for an infinite

Being to be any otherwise than infinitely offended, who is in no wise finite, but infinite in all his divine Perfections; therefore no less than an infinite Satisfaction could do for Sin; that so an infinite Being might freely pardon it and save the Sinner, without any Injury done to his Justice, but to the Honour of that, and of all his other infinite Perfections: Nor could any less than an infinite Person make such an infinite Satisfaction: Therefore it was absolutely necessary, both for the Preservation of the divine Honour, and also for our Redemption, and Salvation, that our Surety should be both God and Man in one Person; and it was the infinite Dignity of his Godhead, that put an infinite Value upon his humane Sacrifice, and rendered it infinite, and equal to the Offence; so a sufficient Compensation, and Atonement for Sin.

Finally I believe, that the Sacrifice and Satisfaction of *Christ*, was not meerly Arbitrary, but Necessary also, *i. e.* there was an absolute Necessity for it, for the preserving of the Honour of the divine Perfections: For God could not (consistent with the Honour of his Justice, Truth, and Holiness,) pardon Sin, justify or save one Sinner, without a complete Satisfaction for Sin.

I also believe, that as he was delivered for our Offences, so he arose from the Dead the third Day for our Justification, according to the Scriptures; continued forty Days on Earth
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after his Resurrection, then ascended up into Glory, is now at the right Hand of the Majesty on High, where he appears in the Presence of God for us, is our Advocate with the Father, and ever lives to make Intercession for us; and because he so lives, his redeemed shall live also; who being reconciled to God by his Death, they shall be saved by his Life; and also that there the Heavens shall retain him, until the Restitution of all Things, and then shall he come from thence, to Judge both Quick and Dead.

I believe, that *Christ* as our Mediator, now sustains a threefold Character, and executes a threefold Office; to wit, those of Priest, Prophet, and King; as a Priest interceding for us; as a Prophet Illuminating, Teaching, Informing and Conducting of us into all necessary Truth; as a King, Conquering and Subduing of us to himself, Ruling and Governing of us, externally by his Word, and internally by his Spirit and Grace, and also subduing all his and our Enemies; these he now executes in Glory; in order to bring about the Salvation of all his Chosen and Redeemed, that are yet behind.

I believe, there is Salvation, in none but in *Christ* alone; and that the Salvation which is in him is all of Grace, not of or for Works; for we are not saved according to our Works, but according to the purpose and Grace of God, given to us in *Christ*, before the World began.

I farther believe, that though we are not saved for our Works, yet we are not saved without them: Though Salvation be all of Grace through Faith in the Merits of *Christ*, and is bestowed for his Righteousness Sake alone; yet we are not saved without good Works accompanying of that Salvation, in them that are saved; though good Works are not necessary in order to merit Salvation, yet they are necessary in the Way of Salvation; for the Honour of God our Saviour; they are the Fruits of a true and lively Faith, and they discover a true Christian, as good Fruit makes manifest the Goodness of the Tree; though they are not the Cause of Salvation, yet they are the necessary Consequences and Product of saving Grace.

I farther believe, that Man having lost all his Power, and his Will being corrupted, he hath by Nature no Will nor Power to repent and turn to God; but that the Work of regeneration is the sole Product of the Spirit of God, efficaciously working on the Heart of a Sinner, by means of the Word, and Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and that Faith and Repentance are the special Gifts of God; his sovereign and free distinguishing Favours, whereby he maketh one to differ from another.

I also believe, that Man by the fall, having lost all his original Righteousness, has none of his own that can answer the Demands of Law and Justice, either for original Sin, or his

his actual Transgressions, but he stands exposed to divine Wrath, without an Interest in the Righteousness of Jesus Christ; which Righteousness was of old, by the free, eternal immanent Act of Gods Grace, fore-designed for Sinners; was in the Fulness of Time wrought out for them by *Christ*; is in due time applied to them by the Spirit; He working Faith in them to look out unto it, lay hold upon it, and put it on them as their justifying Righteousness, wherein they stand accepted of God, unto eternal Life; being justified therein, by God's free Grace-act of Imputation, founded on an everlasting Covenant.

I believe, that our Peace with God, and our Adoption, flow unto us as the Effects of our Justification by *Christ*; for being justified by Faith, (not subjectively, but objectively) we have Peace with God, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, and we are all the Children of God by Faith, in Jesus Christ: For to as many as received him, to them he gave Power to become the Sons of God, even to as many as believe on his Name; who are Born of God himself, into the Family of God, and are of the Household of him their Heavenly Father in *Christ*; unto which Adoption of Sons, they were pre-ordained in *Christ*, in the Eternal good-pleasure of the Divine Will.

Sanctification I believe, to be inseparably connected with Justification, insomuch, that he who is Justified, is also Sanctified, tho' there
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is this Difference to be observed, *viz.* that Justification is an Act of God's free Grace without us, freely imputing the Righteousness of another to us, unto Justification of Life; graciously accepting of us therein, as compleatly Righteousness in his Sight without Works; but Sanctification is the Work of the Divine Spirit within us. Justification is at once, and that for ever, there is no iterating of it, or falling from it: Sanctification is by Degrees; being begun in Regeneration, maintained and brought to Perfection in a progressive Manner, by the same divine Hand that began the same. And tho' it is a Work that is often beclouded, and hid from the Believer, when the Graces of the Spirit are at a low Ebb as to their Exercise in the Soul; yet it is a Work that never extinguishes in the Soul in whom it is begun, but doth again revive thro' the constant Indwelling of the Spirit of *Christ*, and is brought to Perfection. Justification is that which frees us from Guilt and Condemnation, and entitles us to Salvation and Eternal Life, and all the Graces, Blessings, and Benefits conducive thereunto, even to Sanctification itself: But Sanctification, is that which frees us first from the Dominion of Sin, and in Time from the Being of Sin within us; but it entitles us to no Spiritual or Eternal Blessing, but is our Meetness for Communion with God in this World, and fits us for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, in the full Fruition of God in *Christ*, in that State of super-added Blessedness

Blessedness in the future World : So, although we do not, with the *Papists*, blend Justification with Sanctification ; yet we believe our Sanctification, is as necessary as our Justification, and that it is in Vain to boast of any of them alone ; for they ever go together, nor can they be severed ; for what God by an immutable Decree in Election hath joined together, there is none can part asunder ; and this is the Work of God, called Sanctification of the Spirit, flowing from God's Eternal Election thereunto, thro' the Purchase of the Blood of *Christ*, which cleanseth from all Sin. As good Works are necessary in the Way of Salvation, so I believe, that we are not able of our selves to perform them in a right Way and Manner, either by the Power of Nature, or Grace in the Habit ; but stand in need of a fresh Supply of Grace from the Fulness of *Christ* : Therefore as it is our Duty to work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, yet it must be thro' the Lord Working in us both to will and to do of his good-pleasure ; for it is God that worketh all our Works in us, without whom, his own Disciples could do nothing.

I also believe, the final Perseverance of the Saints, as it is certain and infallibly secured by the Immutability of God in his Love, Will, Purpose, and Covenant, his Faithfulness to his Promise, the Merits and Intercession of *Christ*, their Union to him, and the continual Indwelling of the Spirit ; together with the Fulness of
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all Grace and Strength, treasured up in *Christ*, engaged to see it effectually brought to pass.

I farther believe, that there will be an universal Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and of the Unjust at the last Day.

Moreover I believe, that there will be a General and Final Judgment; that God in *Christ*, will be Judge both of Quick and Dead at his Appearing and Kingdom; that all shall appear before the Judgment-Seat of *Christ*, and every one be judged and rewarded according to the Deeds done in their Bodies, whether Good or Evil; that the Righteous shall be received into the Bosom of Eternal Glory, where they will be for ever with the Lord; but the Wicked shall be sentenced to Eternal Punishment, under the infinite and inconceivable Wrath of an incensed God.

I also believe, that now, when the Righteous Die, their Souls are immediately with *Christ*, in Glory, where they shall abide till they come at the last Day, to reassume their own proper Bodies, as raised from the Dead, in which they dwelt while in this World: And that the Wicked as soon as they Die, their Souls go immediately to their Judge, and receive their Doom to their appointed Place of endless Perdition, there to remain till they come at the last Day, to take their Bodies again, wherein they resided in this World, and merited the same to themselves, by their wicked Works.

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Furthermore, I believe, that the Gospel is the appointed Means by which God will gather in his Elect to *Christ*; and his Foundation stands sure, having this Seal, the Lord knows them that are his; and he sends his Gospel to a Place, because he has a People there to gather in.

This Gospel is the glad Tidings of Salvation by Grace, thro' Jesus Christ, as I believe; and the preaching of *Christ* I believe to be our doctrinally Laying a sure Foundation for Faith, or for Sinners to build upon, and that safely, for eternal Life, for other sure Foundation no Man can lay.

The Church of God invisible, I believe to consist of all the Elect, chosen in *Christ*, enrolled in Heaven, redeemed by his Blood; and this is the Number of them, of whom he was given to be the Head, and by Union with him, they become *Christ* mystical.

I believe that *Christ* has instituted his visible Churches in the World, wherein he has his Word duly preached, Officers duly chosen and ordained, Ordinances duly administred, Rule and Order duly observed, Members duly admitted, upon their giving an Account, some Way or other, to the Church's Satisfaction, of a Work of Grace on their Souls, approving themselves by a Conversation becoming the gospel Discipline, duly put into Execution against Offenders, in order to preserve his Honour in his House.

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I believe that Baptism is an Ordinance of *Christ*, to be administred in the Name of the sacred Trinity, by his Authority; that Water is to be applied to the baptized, as a Sign and Token of God's Covenant, and as a Representation of the Down-powerings of the Spirit in Regeneration, and of the Application of the Blood of *Christ*; I believe that adult Believers are the legitimate Subjects of Baptism, if not baptized in their Infancy, as in the Apostles Days; and that the Infants of those that are Believers, those who know and profess the Truth, who keep to, and walk in the Ways of God, who are not avowed Enemies thereunto, have a Right to have this Ordinance administred to them, as of old, in the same Age of the Church; and as in the Church of the *Jews* they had a Right to Circumcision, instead whereof Baptism was instituted, and introduced into the New Testament Church.

The Ordinance of the Supper, I believe to be an Ordinance of Christ's own Appointment, to be kept up in the Church, to the End of the World: That Bread is to be broken and received, Wine poured out and drunk, in that sacred Ordinance, with Thanksgiving; to hold forth the Death of the Lord Jesus till he come, to keep up a Remembrance of his Body and Blood, and to celebrate the exceeding and matchless Love of a dying Saviour: Believers only are the lawful Subjects of this Ordinance, for they only are so qualified for it, as is required
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of all that partake thereof; even that they be able to discern the Lord's Body by Faith, so as to feed spiritually upon his Merits, Blood, and Righteousness; and to approve themselves by a suitable Conversation, to be true Penitents and real Believers in *Christ*.

I believe that it is the Duty of every one who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have received never so small a Measure of Faith, to give themselves up unto, and to join themselves with a visible Church of *Christ*, according to his Will, that they may with them partake of this holy Ordinance of his Supper, and keep up a fresh Remembrance of his dying Love, and enjoy his Presence, and hold Communion with him in this, as in other Ordinances of the Gospel.

I believe, as it is my Duty to be instant, in Season, and out of Season, in dispensing of the Word; so it is the Duty of People to attend on the same, and to wait upon God in other Parts of publick Worship.

I also believe, that Prayer and Singing of Psalms are moral as well as spiritual Duties; and as they are moral, 'tis the Duty of all Men to pray and sing Praises to God, especially in the Publick Worship of God; and more especially to pray privately and secretly; but abundantly more the Duty of the Saints, who are under the strongest Obligations to it, of all Men in the World besides; and should these be silent, the Stones in the Wall would cry out.

These Things I firmly believe, and all Things else, which I, for Brevity's Sake, may have omitted, revealed in the Scriptures of Truth; and hope and desire I may be enabled to maintain them to the End of Life, in the Face of all Opposition, as being set in my Work for the Defence of the Gospel.

Now, *To the one Supreme God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be Glory for ever. Amen.*

F I N I S.



A
S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

At the NEW MEETING

I N

WHITE-ROW SPITAL-FIELDS,

On THURSDAY 29 November 1759.

Being the Day appointed by his MAJESTY

For a GENERAL THANKSGIVING.

By EDWARD HITCHIN.

(Price SIX-PENCE.)

S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

At the NEW MEETING

IN

WHITE-RIDGE FIELDS

On Thursday 29 November 1795

Being the Day appointed by the NEW METHODISTS

For a General Thanksgiving

By EDWARD HITCHIN

(Price Six-Pence)

